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## REPORT ON NEWARK - PART ONE

TOM SHYDER: Almost three years ago Carl Stokes did a special report on Newark, New Jersey. At that time, Newark was regarded as the prime example of all the worst ills affecting the nation's central cities. Has Newark made any progress in curing its ills in the intervening three years? Carl went back to Newark to find out. Here he is with tonight's report. Carl.

CARL STOKES: Thank you, Tom.

Three years ago we found Newark to be a social disaster. The city had the highest crime rate in the nation, a worse drug addiction problem than New York City, substandard housing, substandard education, the highest VD rate in the United States, and the highest rate of new tuberculosis cases, and infant and maternal mortality.

Then, as now, the city's future centered on Mayor Kenneth Gibson, re-elected after four years in office. I said then that Newark's hope for recovery would largely depend on the leadership shown by Mayor Gibson in his second term. Now, as the Mayor's second term draws to a close, there are not many good things to report, and the root cause is Newark's fleeing industry, and the consequent lack of jobs.

Newark's business district was once among the most prosperous in the Northeast. Today the imposing buildings remain, but they are largely facades. The big companies have moved out. The jobs have gone--with even the Prudential Insurance Company maintaining only a skeleton staff. And Broad Street, Newark's main thoroughfare was once renowned as a shopping center. But today the elegant shops have gone. Fast turnover jump stores, as they are called, dominate the area, symbols of the city's decline.

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And Newark is a minority city. 70% black. 20% Puerto Rican. A city of extreme racial consciousness, and racial antagonism. And of Newark's four hundred thousand residents, most live in areas like this, where urban decay, crime and poverty flourish, where welfare is a way of life, and unemployment runs at 24% of the potential labor force, where substandard is a euphemistic description of living conditions.

Newark badly needs decent housing for its minorities and low income, elderly residents. Little has been done in that regard. But Mayor Gibson has done a good job in demolishing old, decrepit, burned-out, and abandoned buildings. I'm standing in one of the wide open spaces just a few hundred yards from downtown Newark. It's one of the areas that was devastated during the riots ten years ago. Since Mayor Gibson took office seven years ago, he's torn down over one thousand houses, thus eliminating much urban blight, and havens for drug addicts.

The issue remains, however, could the Mayor have done more on the constructive side in providing more decent housing for the needy in Newark?

Much of the public housing that went up in Newark in the 60s quickly turned into high rise slums, harboring so much violence and crime, and so lacking in services, that in some cases, more than half of the largely black residents moved out.

One of Mayor Gibson's most vocal critics is City Council President Earl Harris, an undeclared candidate for Mayor, who accuses Gibson of misusing a half billion dollars in federal funds. Harris claims no amount of federal money can save Newark without job opportunities for the people.

EARL HARRIS: Now, the second, or the third highest budget in city government is our welfare budget, the general systems budget in the city of Newark. So what we need is job opportunities for people; job opportunities will provide pride; job opportunities will make a better--a conducive situation in the home, where the parents will find that they will have better results in terms of their children walking, leaving the home, going to school, and getting a better education, because they will have the opportunities of having had a good breakfast, having had a decent shelter, having decent clothing, and the like--with job opportunities.

STOKES: The extent of the joblessness problem was apparent at a Newark unemployment office. The unemployment rate for the city, the highest of any major city in the nation, is 16.2%, 7% higher than the average for the state of New Jersey, which at 9.2% is itself among the highest in the nation.

What do you think is a major problem in Newark?

MAN: I'd say it was a toss-up between unemployment and crime. You know, the unemployment's so high, because everybody's -- a lot of big companies are moving out of Newark.

STOKES: What is your profession?

MAN: I'm a window cleaner. I used to clean windows on the big buildings, the telephone building, and the Mutual, Prudential, you know, all them companies moving out, there's no work in the city anymore.

STOKES: Miss, what do you think is the major problem in Newark?

WOMAN: We need more jobs. Don't have enough jobs for the colored people especially. That's the major problem.

STOKES: What has Mayor Gibson been able to do about that?

WOMAN: Well, so far I haven't seen him doing anything about it.

STOKES: The people who have jobs in crime-ridden Newark can hardly wait to get out of it at night. For them, Newark is no longer a place in which to live--and that's why Newark is known as a five p.m. city. The workers depart for New York City and the New Jersey townships. But the jobless minority people remain. They have no other place to go.

Unemployment is Newark's most immediate problem. But the city has a deep, underlying problem that is just as bad. Newark has what's been described as the worst public school system in the nation, and it's turning out citizens who are functional illiterates. We'll take a look at Newark's school system in the second part of our Urban Journal Report tomorrow.

Tom.